

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 PPT-02 CU-04 SY-10 NEA-10

SS-15 L-03 H-02 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 RSR-01

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8199

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, UR

SUBJ: DETENTION OF AMERICAN STUDENTS

REF: STATE 074840; MOSCOW 4486

1. CONSOFFS, AT 2345 LOCAL APRIL 20, INTERVIEWED SEVEN RELEASED
AMCIT STUDENTS IN THEIR ROOM AT HOTEL INTOURIST, MOSCOW. STUDENTS
IN GOOD HEALTH AND SPIRITS. JOSEPH KLEIN, ONE OF STUDENTS,
HAS ALREADY INFORMED HIS PARENTS OF RELEASE AND HAS REQUESTED
THAT THEY NOTIFY PARENTS OF OTHERS. DEPT. REQUESTED NONETHELESS
TO NOTIFY PARENTS OF RELEASE, IN EVENT THAT TELEPHONE NOTIFICA-
TION DOES NOT REACH THEM.

2. STUDENTS TOLD CONSOFFS THAT GROUP ENTERED MOSCOW OVIR AFTER-
NOON APRIL 20 WITH SIGN INTENDING TO DRAMATIZE ISSUE OF SOVIET
JEWISH EMIGRATION. GROUP STATED THAT THEY WERE PROMPLTY SET
UPON BY CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS IN
BUILDING, INCLUDING MILITIAMAN. GROUP ALLEGED THAT THEY WERE
PUNCHED, KICKED, SPAT UPON AND EVENTUALLY PHYSICALLY EJECTED FROM
OVIR BUILDING.

3. STUDENTS THEN SAT DOWN IN STREET IN FRONT OF OVIR FOR ABOUT
HALF HOUR AND CONTINUED SINGING JEWISH SONGS. THEY STATED THAT
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GROUP OF OVER ONE HUNDRED ALLEGEDLY SURROUNDED, KICKED, HIT, AND VERBALLY ABUSED THEM. UNIFORMED MILITIA SUBSEQUENTLY ARRIVED AND REMOVED GROUP TO MILITIA STATION. GROUP CLAIMS THAT UNIFORMED MILITIA ALSO ASSAULTED AND ABUSED THEM. STUDENTS, WHO WERE SEPARATED FROM ONE ANOTHER AT THIS MILITIA STATION, ALLEGED THEY REPEATEDLY ASKED TO CALL EMBASSY BUT REQUESTS WERE DENIED BY UNIFORMED MILITIA AND PLAINCLOTHES INTERROGATORS.

4. AT ABOUT 1700 HOURS, GROUP WAS TRANSFERED TO SECOND MILITIA STATION WHERE TREATMENT REPORTEDLY IMPROVED. THEY STATED, HOWEVER, THAT THEY WERE STILL REFUSED PERMISSION TO CALL EMBASSY. AT APPROXIMATELY 2100 HOURS LOCAL, GROUP WAS READ PREPARED STATEMENT THET THEY HAD BEEN " CONVICTED" OF UNSPECIFIED CHARGE AND " SENTENCED" TO STRICT REGIME." STAMENT, WHICH WAS READ IN RUSSIAN AND TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY INTERPRETOR, WENT ON TO STATE THAT IN VIEW OF FACT THAT GROUP WAS IN USSR FOR FIRST TIME, THEY WOULD BE RELEASED WITH A WARNING, THAT FURTHER TRANSGRESSION ON SOVIET SOIL WOULD BE SEVERLY PUNISHED.

5. GROUP TOLD CONSOFFS THAT THEY WISHED TO HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE TOMORROW AT MOSCOW CHORLA SYNAGOGUE AND TO FRATERNIZE WITH SOVIET JEWS WISHING EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL. CONSOFFS REPEATEDLY WARNED GROUP THAT PREMATURE DISCLOSURES TO PRESS COULD JEOPARDIZE THEIR SAFE DEPARTURE FROM USSR (SCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY MORNING APRIL 22 ON AEROFLOT SU-261 TO VIENNA, WITH PANAM CONNECTION TO NYC). AFTER CONSIDERABLE ARGUMENTATION, GROUP APPEARED TO ACCEDE TO CONSOFFS' ADVICE. TEHY ALSO EXPRESSED DEEP APPRECIATION FOR EMBASSY PART IN EFFECTING THEIR RELEASE.

6. MOSCOW CORRESPONDENTS ARE AWARE OF HOTEL (THOUGH NOT YET ROOM) WHERE GROUP IS LODGED, AND WILL LIKELY BE AT SYNAGOGUE MORING APRIL 21 FOR JEWISH HOLIDAY OBSERVANCES. IN VIEW OF INTENSE DESIRE OF GROUP TO RELATE STORY TO PRESS, CORRESPONDENTS MAY RECEIVE STORY TOMORROW AT SYNAGOGUE. FYI: EMBASSY PLANS TO HAVE CONSOFFS AT SYNAGOGUE, WHO WILL FURTHER CAUTION GROUP AGAINST ANY CONDUCT WHICH COULD JEOPARDIZE THEIR SAFE DEPARTURE. CONSOFF WILL ALSO GO TO MOSCOW AIRPORT SUNDAY TO DO WHATEVER POSSIBLE TO ENSURE THEIR SAFE DEPARTURE. END FYI.
DUBS

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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